



HOWARD COUNTY HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

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March 22, 2021

Howard County Times/Columbia Flier
Attn: Erin Hardy, Content Editor

Dear Editor:

The Howard County Human Rights Commission condemns recent hateful acts, in Howard County and throughout the country, against the Asian American and Pacific Islander, Hispanic and Latino American, immigrant, and Black and African American communities. As an organization, we are committed to creating a county where the human rights of all are respected and protected. Our mission is to cultivate a community where the ideals of equity, inclusion, respect, and non-discrimination are interwoven into everyday life.

During the last year, there has been a documented increase of hateful acts, including verbal harassment and physical assault, against the Asian American and Pacific Islander community. On February 11, 2021, four Asian-owned establishments in Howard County were burglarized at the start of the Lunar New Year. On March 4, 2021, an individual directed discriminatory and hateful comments toward Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, Hispanic and Latino Americans, and immigrants during a meeting of the Howard County Racial Equity Task Force. In addition, on March 16, 2021, an individual who was allegedly targeting Asian-owned spas murdered eight individuals, six of them Asian women, in Atlanta, Georgia. We are saddened by this loss and assure the members of Howard County's Asian American and Pacific Islander community, as well as members of the Hispanic and Latino American and immigrant communities, that the Howard County Human Rights Commission stands in solidarity with them.

Hate biased incidents continue to affect others, as well. On March 13, 2021, the marquee sign at Glenwood Middle School was vandalized by spray painting over the word "Black" in the statement "Black Lives Matter." This vandalism, which is being investigated as a hate crime, continues a nationwide trend of hateful acts directed against the Black and African American community. The Howard County Human Rights Commission supports members of Howard County's Black and African American community in denouncing this act.

We join countless others in condemning these and other acts of hate. We ask our fellow residents to exhibit compassion and support for all of their neighbors – regardless of race, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, age, disabilities, or gender identity – including members of the most recently targeted Asian American

and Pacific Islander, Hispanic and Latino American, immigrant, and Black and African American communities, many of whom are living in fear. Kindness is very powerful. We must speak up and speak out against hate and all types of aggression no matter where it exists, whom it targets, or what form it takes. Our unity in this regard shall overcome these terrible acts.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Scott B. Markow", written on a light blue rectangular background.

Scott B. Markow, Chair
Howard County Human Rights Commission